



Commonwealth Nurses Federation

Strategic Directions

**2005–2010**





Issued by

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# CONTENTS

	Page
Foreword	4
Our purpose	5
Our vision	5
Our values	5
Introduction	6
Key goals	7
Objectives	8
Key strategic directions	8

## FOREWORD

The Commonwealth Nurses Federation (CNF) was formed in 1973 and has achieved significant recognition within the Commonwealth. With a growing membership base, it is a credible, democratic and participatory federation of national nursing and midwifery associations (NNAs) from all regions of the Commonwealth.

The CNF works with national nursing and midwifery associations in order to influence health policy, develop nursing networks, improve nursing standards and competence, and strengthen nursing leadership throughout the Commonwealth.

The CNF maintains close links with Commonwealth bodies and civil society organisations within the Commonwealth 'family' and liaises with international bodies, such as the World Health Organization and the International Council of Nurses. These links enable the CNF to plan strategically on issues in a global context.

The CNF participates actively in the work of two important Commonwealth bodies: the Commonwealth Steering Committee for Nursing and Midwifery and the Commonwealth HIV and AIDS Action Group.

The CNF's work is supported by the provision of office space within the Royal College of Nursing, UK.

The CNF will continue to strengthen its democratic processes by increasing the involvement of its member NNAs. The CNF's *Strategic Directions 2005-2010*, endorsed by the CNF Board in Singapore 15-16 May 2007, sets out actions necessary to meet the CNF vision and achieve CNF goals.

## OUR PURPOSE

Article 3 of the CNF's Constitution\* states that the purpose of the CNF is to contribute to the improved health of citizens of the Commonwealth by fostering access to nursing education, influencing health policy, developing nursing networks and strengthening nursing leadership.

\*The CNF's current Constitution was approved at its General Meeting in Singapore, May 2005.

## OUR VISION

The CNF will be a highly visible and dynamic organisation which will ensure the nurses of the Commonwealth influence nursing practice, international health policy and the work of Commonwealth Health Ministers. The CNF will achieve this through:

- sharing information,
- effective advocacy,
- inspiring leadership,
- appropriate training opportunities, and
- linking with other relevant organisations and bodies.

## OUR VALUES

The CNF **values and respects** the diversity among member NNAs.

The CNF **is committed** to sharing health and nursing information throughout the Commonwealth.

The CNF **supports** the development of nurses as leaders in health care and the more effective use of nurses at all policy and decision making levels.

The CNF **supports** the principles associated with inclusiveness, transparency, trust and professionalism in relation to its work.

# ***STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS 2005-2010***

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Nurses - leaders in health care**

The CNF is concerned with the professional development of nursing and midwifery and the health of all the peoples of the Commonwealth. These Strategic Directions are intended to reflect the current health environment; the impact of health policies on the peoples of the Commonwealth; the need for strong, effective leadership; and the needs of the member NNAs of the CNF.

### **Changes in the workforce**

There have been significant changes to the health workforce over recent years and this is evident in the nursing workforce. Greater demands are being placed on nurses with often significantly increased workloads and responsibilities. In response to financial and other pressures, significant numbers of permanent nursing positions in the workforce have been lost. Casualisation of the nursing workforce has threatened work stability and the quality of nursing care in many countries of the Commonwealth.

The nursing workforce is one of the most internationally mobile professions. Migration patterns are exacerbating workforce shortages and contributing recruitment and retention problems for many countries. The HIV and AIDS pandemic has also taken its toll on the nursing workforce in many countries. All these factors present serious challenges in developing workforce strategies. There is a need to ensure that the nursing profession continues to work with consumers and community groups in responding to the health problems facing communities.

The growth of unlicensed assistant personnel (caregivers) and the emergence of new occupational groups in some countries have posed a further challenge to the nursing profession. The regulation of nursing is an issue that many countries in the Commonwealth are reviewing in efforts to find an appropriate legislative framework. There is a continuing need to ensure that public safety is a paramount concern and that nurses deliver high quality, safe, expert care.

The growing complexity in health care delivery and modern technologies continue to require nurses to be better educated. Many post graduate programs are now available and there is a need to ensure that these programs remain clinically relevant and provide a sound basis for generating improved evidence based professional nursing care.

### **Activities of Commonwealth Health Ministers**

The Commonwealth Health Ministers now meet annually in Geneva, Switzerland prior to meetings of the World Health Assembly. The CNF is represented at these meetings as an accredited civil society organisation (CSO). Matters addressed at recent Health Ministers' meetings have included:

- maternal and child health,
- human resources for health,
- HIV and AIDS,
- globalisation and health,
- adolescent health,
- tobacco control,
- the work of non-governmental organisations, and
- eHealth.

The Health Ministers also receive regular reports of the work and recommendations of the Commonwealth Steering Committee for Nursing and Midwifery.

### **The Commonwealth Steering Committee for Nursing and Midwifery**

Following recommendations by Commonwealth Health Ministers, the Commonwealth Steering Committee for Nursing and Midwifery was formed in 1993. All the CNF Board Members sit on this very important Committee together with a selection of Chief Nursing Officers and other persons. The work of the Committee includes:

- the organisation of regional workshops for nurses and midwives on issues including human resources and HIV and AIDS,
- the provision of guidance on matters such as national action plans, leadership, HIV and AIDS, human resources and recruitment and retention of staff,
- surveys of nursing and midwifery in the Commonwealth, and
- a mentoring scheme for nursing colleagues.

## **KEY GOALS**

### **Goal One**

The CNF will be a focused, democratic, visible, dynamic and well-managed organisation.

### **Goal Two**

The CNF will provide inspiring leadership and be proactive politically and professionally.

### **Goal Three**

The CNF will constructively influence and participate in the work of the Commonwealth Health Ministers and the Commonwealth Steering Committee for Nursing and Midwifery.

### **Goal Four**

The CNF will further develop and promote strategic alliances with Commonwealth professional groups and other key international bodies.

### **Goal Five**

The CNF will communicate effectively with all key stakeholders.

## OBJECTIVES

The CNF **is committed** to supporting nurses and national nursing associations (NNAs) in order to contribute toward quality care for patients, families and communities.

The CNF **is committed** to fostering active participatory membership among all countries of the Commonwealth and collaborating with a range of international organisations.

The CNF **will provide** assistance in leadership development for nurses with respect to health matters and health policy.

The CNF **is committed** to further developing and facilitating nursing networks within the Commonwealth and building relationships, which contribute to this objective.

The CNF **supports** the continuous improvement of nursing standards and the competency of nurses through education, research and advocacy.

The CNF **is committed** to influencing the development of health policy throughout the countries of the Commonwealth through the unique contribution of nursing.

Note: The stated objectives and functions of the CNF are contained in Articles 4 and 5 of its Constitution, as approved at its General Meeting in Singapore, May 2005.

## KEY STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

During the period 2005-2010, the CNF will focus its activities and energies on the following:

### Strategic Alliances

The CNF will:

1. endeavour to participate more in events linked to meetings of Commonwealth Heads of Government and Health Ministers in order to involve civil society organisations such as the CNF more in Commonwealth processes;
2. continue, through its Board, to make a constructive and influential contribution to the work of the Commonwealth Steering Committee for Nursing and Midwifery;
3. support and foster strategic alliances with regional nursing organisations;
4. further its strategic alliances with other Commonwealth professional groups in particular those representing doctors, dentists and pharmacists;
5. seek to maintain regular relations with the World Health Organization;
6. continue to work closely with the International Council of Nurses; and
7. establish and further strategic alliances with other appropriate groups, organisations and individuals.

### Membership

The CNF will:

1. further develop and strengthen the input of member NNAs;

2. further develop, strengthen and define the roles of its Officers and regional Board members;
3. continue efforts to increase its membership base;
4. continue to promote the contribution that it can make by means of initiatives such as representation on appropriate external bodies and attendance at key Commonwealth meetings;
5. disseminate material on educational opportunities;
6. continue to produce and distribute its Newsletter and other relevant publications; and
7. continue to contribute to and distribute relevant publications of other organisations.

## **Funding**

The CNF will:

1. make application to the Commonwealth Foundation for its core and activity funding on an annual basis in line with the Foundation's funding criteria;
2. make efforts to improve its financial base to facilitate its continuing work;
3. explore additional sources of funding to better support its activities;
4. keep under review its membership subscription base and consider the introduction of revised subscription arrangements; and
5. continue to explore ways to better support those member NNAs facing financial hardship, especially in countries facing catastrophic events such as war, major natural disasters and famine.

## **Projects**

The CNF will:

1. identify and develop specific projects to further its aims and objectives and seek specific funding for these projects;
2. identify and develop projects that take account of the Millennium Development Goals\* relating to health (ie child mortality, maternal health, HIV and AIDS, malaria and other diseases);
3. \*The Millennium Development Goals come from the UN Millennium Declaration signed by 189 countries in September 2000.
4. continue to develop initiatives on HIV and AIDS (and other diseases) and explore opportunities to hold workshops, possibly with other bodies, and in conjunction with other activities;
5. work with other key agencies in identifying and developing strategies to address the concerns of the nursing workforce including leadership, human resources, registration, regulation, post-registration education, role development etc;
6. develop specific position statements on contemporary health and nursing issues as considered necessary;

7. support the work of the Commonwealth Steering Committee for Nursing and Midwifery and encourage and monitor the development and implementation of national action plans for nursing and midwifery;
8. explore the use of overarching themes for its work to better convey the purpose of the activities that it undertakes;
9. explore opportunities to better promote the nursing and midwifery contribution in conjunction with Commonwealth Day (the second Monday of March);
10. contribute to reports for the pre-World Health Assembly Commonwealth Health Ministers' Meetings on health and nursing issues and participate in these meetings as an accredited observer organisation; and
11. ensure that the structures of workshops and similar activities, in which it is involved, include evaluation methods.

## **Communication**

The CNF will:

1. Improve internal communication as necessary to accommodate the growing membership of the CNF and encourage more active representation.
2. Identify the information needs of member NNAs and of regional Board members.
3. Ensure that information is sent out to member NNAs in a timely manner to facilitate responses and with clear recommendations where appropriate.
4. Continue to review the content, layout, and presentation of material forwarded to member NNAs and to Board members.
5. Ensure that Board members and member NNAs have the opportunity to comment on material relevant to the affairs of the CNF.
6. Use different options for communication (facsimile, telephone, email, etc) as appropriate.
7. Increase the awareness of the CNF's professional achievements, expertise and networks throughout the Commonwealth in order to retain and improve its profile professionally and publicly.
8. Enhance communication with bodies such as the International Council of Nurses, the World Health Organization and relevant organisations.
9. Further develop the professional profile of the regional Board members and Officers through forums, conferences, etc.
10. Ensure that Board members and Officers have the opportunity to submit relevant material on the activities of the CNF to national nursing journals for publication.
11. Maintain a dynamic website linked to the websites of the Commonwealth Foundation and other appropriate bodies.